

Chapter 12 – Mary: The Church’s First and Most Perfect Mother

Mary is the first and greatest of all the disciples of Christ. In anticipation that she was to bear the Son of God, Mary was preserved from the time of her conception from original sin. The Immaculate Conception does not refer to the virginal conception and birth of Christ, but rather to Mary’s being conceived without inheriting original sin.

The Holy Spirit’s power made possible the conception of Jesus in Mary’s womb. It is the constant teaching of the Church that Mary remained a virgin even after the birth of Jesus.

In the mystery of the Assumption, Mary experiences immediately what we all will experience eventually, a bodily resurrection like Christ’s.

Like Mary, the Church is virginal, in the spiritual sense of the undivided heart and of fidelity in its most luminous form.

Like Mary, the Church is maternal, giving birth to people in Christ.

REFLECTION:

- How many feast days in honor of Mary can you recall?
- What is your favorite devotion to Mary? How does that devotion deepen your spiritual life?